

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

believing or imagining that we are engaged in weaving plots in the lands of the Salimbeni, or in any other place in the world. We are only plotting to defeat the devil, and to deprive him of the lordship that he has assumed over man by mortal sin, and to take hate from man's heart and pacify him with Christ crucified and with his neighbour. These are the plots that we are weaving, and that I wish to be woven by whoever is with me. I am sorry for our negligence, whereby we do this only in lukewarm fashion. And therefore I pray thee, sweet son, and do thou pray all the others, to pray to God that I may be more zealous in doing this and every holy work for His honour and the salvation of souls. Poor calumniated Fra Raimondo begs you to pray to God for him, that he may be good and patient." ¹

Catherine was now, to her great sorrow, compelled to sever herself from her *poverello calunniato*. She sent Raimondo from the Rocca to the Pope : " with certain proposals," he says, " which would have been good for the holy Church of God, if they had been understood ;" and, at Rome, the General of the order compelled him to resume the office of prior of the Minerva, which he had already held under Urban V, whereby he was unable to return to Catherine. And, indeed, save for a few weeks, she was never again to be united, save in spirit, with her " most beloved and most dear father and son in Christ Jesus, given me by that sweet Mother Mary." For three years, his spiritual ministrations had been of the utmost consolation to her ; she could confide in him as in no other of her confessors ; and the parting was most bitter to her, although no word of complaint passed her lips.

The anonymous author of the *Miracoli* tells us of a certain man, a friar apparently, whom he does not name, who had sought Catherine's friendship and wondered at her holy life, but whose devotion towards her changed into carnal love ; until at last, "when she never showed him any other semblance than what was pure and holy," his passion so maddened him that he attempted to take her life in church. " A few days afterwards,

¹ Letter 122